

## Letter to Bar Presidents

Dear Bar Association President,

The Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District, is pleased to announce that it will soon be offering a settlement conference program to litigants in civil cases the court deems suitable for settlement. Patterned after successful programs in the First and Fourth Appellate Districts, this program will use trained mediators, provide facilities for mediation conferences, and provide full time support staff to assist mediators and the parties.

Civil appeals present a special challenge for the mediator. Dispute resolution is substantially more difficult than at the trial level. Typically, the respondent has obtained a judgment that likely will be affirmed. A great deal of money and time has been invested in the litigation. The positions of the parties are harder than ever. That is the challenge. To meet this challenge, a mediator must have sound mediation skills and an understanding of the appellate process. Toward those ends, the Court is providing free appellate mediation training to attorneys recognized for their ability and experience.

Mediation training will be offered to those applicants who are selected to participate in the program. In consideration of the free mediation training, participants must accept up to four mediation referrals. Preparation and the first four hours of the mediations will be pro bono. Thereafter, with the agreement of the parties, mediators may charge an agreed-upon hourly rate.

As President of your County Bar Association, you may be aware of attorneys in your area who might be interested in this program. We are currently accepting applications from attorneys and retired judges who are interested in serving as mediators in the Third District's settlement conference program. Notice of this new program will also be sent to the court executive officers of all the superior courts in the Third District.

Enclosed is a copy of the Mediator Application. We would appreciate it if you would share this information with any prospective mediators. As indicated on the application, those interested should complete the application, attach their résumé, and return it to: Cheryl Butler, Supervising Administrative Specialist, Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District, 900 N Street, Room 400, Sacramento, CA 95814, 916-654-0209.

Very truly yours,

DEENA C. FAWCETT  
Clerk Administrator

Enclosure